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177 With the coming of machinery the Karens have take
463 to mechanics. In the machine shops, foundries and worl
401 shops of the big companies, and in the oil fields the have played their part. They have also done well motor-car mechanics and drivers as well as in electric engineering. In mining they have done their shar although for very difficult underground tunnelling believe they have not been found as daring as the Gurkha of Nepal.

V

RELIGION

● 776 782 Primitive Karens are animists, worshipping th spirits with which their imaginations people the phenc mena of nature, the hills, the streams, and any unusua [822] happenings which they see around them. The change of season are due to conflict between the demons (ofte called by their Burmese name *nats*) of the dry weathe and the wet. Those are victorious whose season i prevailing at the time. The banyan is supposed to b the abode of a very vigorous spirit, probably because th seeds of that tree spring up in all kinds of unsuspecte places.

In addition to the spirits of the wood and mountai there are the family Penates called the *Bgha* that, whe offended, cause illness by eating the *Kala* (psyche) of th person and ultimately cause his death if allowed to g on. They must be appeased by offerings of chicken o pig. Every member of the family must be present on th occasion to save one member from illness. It is hope that the feast will be so tempting that the demon wil leave the sufferer and take the food instead. The custom connected with these feasts differ in various localities an

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among different tribes. In many of the more civilized sections they are no longer carefully observed. Christians do not resort to them.

Sex irregularities are believed to be most abhorrent to the *bgha* and are reputed to have been the cause of most trouble. Among the Bwès they are considered to cause the drying up of land and the failure of crops, and are therefore most severely punished by the elders when discovered. In their primitive state the Karens were unusually free from fornication and adultery. The recent transition period, with the breaking down of old customs and before Western ideals have been established, has seen some relaxation of these conditions.

The old epic song about *Ywa*, the Father God and Creator, and this belief in the existence of God are found among all the tribes. It does not, however, play an important part in their daily lives which are taken up with their struggles with the ever-present *nats* and demons.

Those Karens who were in closest contact with the Burmans, as for example the Pwo Karens, took on a thin veneer of Buddhism and went to the pagodas at the full moon and the quarters, but as a rule it was largely a social conforming that did not have a deep spiritual content.

VI

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Karen is an agglutinated monosyllabic language belonging to the Sinic family of languages. Like the Chinese it has tones which are important in learning to speak it, for the same sound may have entirely different

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CHAPTER IV

MENTAL AND MORAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE KAREN

181 829 609 776 156 The Karen draws the blinds over the windows of his heart and leaves one to wonder what goes on within. I once asked an educated Karen what he thought was the chief characteristic of his race, and he immediately replied that they are a people who can be afraid. Centuries of subjugation and oppression have filled them with fear. During the protracted period of their tribulations, to be caught by a Burman was to be stripped of everything, even of one's clothing, and to be beaten into the bargain. Where only a few families lived on the plains, the women with child dared not undergo confinement in their houses, lest they could not escape from a sudden attack by their oppressors. Karen cartmen still drive around a village rather than through it, although they know there is little danger of having dogs set on them, as there used to be. Not only does the Karen fear his fellow-men, but he is also terrified by the strange and weird beings, demons and ghosts, with which his imagination and credulity people the world. Should he, even by chance, offend any of these—and it is easily done he thinks—he must live in dread of their vengeance. His religion is one of fear, precaution, and propitiatory sacrifice. The trepidations of the past have been perpetuated through generations and, though education has stifled them in a measure, they still crop out on occasion even in the most advanced members of the race.

626 156 609 The Karen is led into all sorts of difficulties by his timidity. He is apprehensive and desirous of avoiding trouble with officers or others. When brought into court to answer questions, often this fear will lead him to deny any knowledge of the facts, instead of relating what he has seen; or he may acknowledge the opposite of what he wants to prove. Not long ago I heard of a man who had what seemed to be a good case, but on the witness-stand he swore to the opposite of what he had told previously. When asked why he did so, he replied that he was so scared that he did not know what he was saying. In thus yielding to his timidity the Karen often in-

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CHAPTER XXI

RELIGIOUS CONCEPTIONS

The Three Conceptions

771 778 Among the Karen we find traces of three distinct religious conceptions, which have left their impress upon the people. The principle underlying the most primitive religious ideas is that of an impersonal power or force residing both in men and things, but which is all-pervasive, invisible except as it betrays itself by its effect on certain things, and invincible in that it can only be overcome in a particular person or thing by a more powerful manifestation of itself in some other object.[1] The Karen designate this force "pgho." It is the equivalent of what the Melanesians know as "mana" and is defined in the *Karen Thesaurus* as a certain more or less unknown force believed to be all about and which can not be overcome.[2] It may reside in certain individuals who, by its aid, are enabled to accomplish unusual tasks. It can be imparted to objects which, by its power, become charms potent for good or ill. The deities are said to possess "pgho" and on that account to be able to do wonderful things. It is also spoken of by the people as revealing itself in the infinite attributes of "Y'wa," the eternal God, but this is, of course, an adaptation to Christian teachings. However, it is in the realm of the magic, rather than in that of religion, that this power is particularly exploited. Those who are able to perform magical deeds are called "pgha a pgho," that is, persons of "pgho."[3]

776 The second religious conception attained by the Karen was the animistic. They entered upon this stage of religious belief when they began to assign personal attributes to the various powers about them, conceiving of every unknown force as a more or less distinct personality. Thus, they personified the vegetative force in the crops as the goddess "Hpi Bi Yaw;" they conceived of the agency that brought the dry and rainy seasons (the monsoon in reality, of course,) as two different demons, each ruling in the upper air dur-

[1] This view was first brought to the attention of scholars by Bishop R. H. Codrington in his work, *The Melanesians*, pp. 227 ff. Compare also J. E. Carpenter, *Comparative Religion*, pp. 80, ff. for a brief but full discussion of the subject.

[2] The *Karen Thesaurus*, old ed., Vol. III, p. 489.

[3] In speaking of the attributes of "Y'wa" the people say: "Y'wa a pgho a phaw." The use of the couplet gives a more finished form of speech.

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ing a period of six months to the exclusion of the other; they assigned a lord ("k' sa") to every mountain and river, and they invested every utensil and object about the house and the animals out-of-doors with separate ghosts ("k'las"). Some of these imaginary beings are beneficent, such as the "Mü xa" or celestial spirits that preside over births; but most of them are malevolent and have to be appeased by continual offerings, sacrifices, and tabus. To keep on good terms with these innumerable spirits consumes a large part of the time and thought of the Karen.[4]

The third conception in the religious traditions of the people is embodied in the "Y'wa" legend, which tells of the placing of the first parents in the garden by "Y'wa," the Creator; their temptation to eat of the forbidden fruit by a serpent or dragon, etc. This story so closely resembles that of the ancient Hebrews, as also certain western Asiatic traditions, that one finds it difficult not to believe that all these traditions somehow had a common origin. Were the "Y'wa" legend marked by distinctive features, we might regard it as one exhibiting only a general resemblance to other traditions extant in other parts of the world, but its parallelism with the account in Genesis precludes this view of the case.[5]

At any rate, the "Y'wa" legend has exercised a strong influence upon the Karen people. To be sure, it did not supplant the ancient animism of the tribes any more than Buddhism has displaced spirit worship among the Burmese. Nevertheless, it was accompanied by the prophesy of the return of the white brother with the Lost Book, which inspired the Karen with the hope of a better future and furnished an admirable foundation on which Christian teachers could build in promoting the development of the Karen nation which, during the last hundred years—the period not only of Christian missions but also of the British conquest and administration of Burma—has been truly remarkable.

The "Y'wa" Tradition

The contrast between the animistic and the "Y'wa" conception of the creation of the world is illustrated in the lines of the following "hta" or poem:

> "When first the earth was made,
> Who worked and built it?
> When it was first formed,
> Who was the creator?"

[4] See Chapter XXII on Supernatural and Mythical Beings, p. 221.
[5] See pp. 10-12.

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"When first the world was created,
The edolius and the termite toiled together.[6]
When the earth was first formed,
These two helped each other and made it."

The "Y'wa" conception appears in the last stanza, given below:

"When first the earth was formed,
It was God ('Y'wa') who formed it.
When first the world was fashioned,
It was God who fashioned it."

In some of the omitted parts of the poem we find the thought expressed that the edolius and the termite were co-workers with God in creating the world. It should, perhaps, be explained that [136] the termite is the white ant, which builds high mounds all over the country; while the *edolius paradiscus* is a black bird, a little smaller than a crow, with two long tail quills having tufts of feathers at the ends. Why this bird should have been given a part in the work of creation does not appear.

Characterization of "Y'wa" as the Eternal One is herewith given in two translations from an ancient poem, the first of these being by an unknown person of an earlier time and the other by Dr. Francis Mason.

"God is eternal, He alone [existed]
Before the world was made; His throne
Interminable ages stood,
And He, the everlasting God.
Two worlds may pass, and yet He lives.
Perfect in attributes divine,
Age after age His glories shine."[7]

The rendering by Dr. Mason is as follows:

"God is unchangeable, external;
He was in the beginning of the world.
God is endless and eternal;
He existed in the beginning of the world.
God is truly unchangeable and eternal;
He existed in ancient time, at the beginning of the world.
The life of God is endless;
A succession of worlds does not measure his existence.
God is perfect in every meritorious attribute,
And dies not in succession on succession of worlds."[8]

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[6] Rev. T. Than Bya, D.D., *Karen Customs, Ceremonies, and Poetry*, p. 51. The Karen name for the edolius is "hte hklu." Dr. Mason speaks of it as the Moulmein nightingale: *Burma*, p. 219.

[7] This version is printed in D. M. Stanton's *The Loyal Karens of Burma*.

[8] Mason, *The Karen Apostle*, op., p. 97.

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Besides being called eternal, God is described as "all powerful" and as "having the knowledge of all things." He created man and "woman from a rib of man," and he made the animals and placed them on the earth.

The power mentioned in the old poems as opposed to "Y'wa" and as having brought evil into the world is "Naw k' plaw." In later poems the name given to him is "Mü kaw li," which is a term of reproach used on account of his often being supposed to assume the female form, in order to accomplish his deceptions on the human race.[1]

He is said to have been a servant of "Y'wa" at first, but to have been cast out of his lord's presence for offering him a gross insult. The other servants of "Y'wa" have ever since cherished the desire to destroy "Mü kaw li," but have never accomplished their purpose. Hence, he continues to roam about, deceiving mankind and spreading death among them, until he shall finally be put out of the way by "Y'wa" himself. He is the direct author of evil and of the curse that has fallen upon the earth which, before his contemptible conduct, had produced rice with kernels as large as pumpkins. It was through his malicious instructions that the people learned to make sacrifices to the "Bgha" and other demons.

The Karen legends and poems give the story of the fall of man in their own picturesque language, which has been translated into English by Dr. D. C. Gilmore, who has brought together the several versions extant in various parts of the country. For the most part I shall paraphrase and condense Dr. Gilmore's translation; for the original narratives, whether in prose or verse, are full of repetitions, variations in insignificant details, and other peculiarities incident to tales that have been handed down by word of mouth.

The Lord "Y'wa," father of the human race, spoke to the first pair he had created: "My son and daughter both, your father will make an orchard for you, and in that orchard there will be seven kinds of trees bearing seven kinds of fruit. Of the seven kinds there

[1] The derivation of the names of this being are interesting. "Naw" is the usual feminine prefix of the names of all females, and "k' plaw" signifies quickly, in reference to the suddenness with which his power to tempt one was exercised. The later name, which has now come into universal use both among non-Christian and Christian Karens as the designation of the Devil, is composed of "mü," meaning woman; "kaw," signifying the state of or pertaining to, and "li," denoting the female *locus impudicus*. This combination constitutes a term of the utmost contempt and refers to the insult which Satan visited upon "Y'wa" when offerings were being brought to him. The Devil's offering was a flower on which he had micturated. His act was discovered and aroused the anger of the entire celestial company.

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There can be no doubt but that the above legend of the fall of man [12] has been largely responsible for the readiness with which the Karen people have accepted Christianity. It led them to believe that they began their existence as a race under the care and protection of "Y'wa," which their ancestors soon forfeited by their disobedience in following the deceptive advice of "Mü kaw li." They believe that their present practices originated from an evil source and should be abandoned; but their veneration for their ancestors and the customs established by them, in addition to their fear of worse consequences should they depart from time-honored usage, makes it exceedingly difficult for them to give up the old ways. They acknowledge the goodness of "Y'wa" and their obligation to worship him; but they feel so hedged about by a multitude of demons who will bring calamities upon them and devour their souls that they placate these, while believing that "Y'wa" will not harm them even though they should not render homage unto him.

They illustrate their predicament by the story of a family occupying a hut near a field during the cultivating season. While the father and mother were absent at work, the children were terrified at home by a tiger that sprang from the bushes and made off with the sow. At nightfall the children told their parents what had happened. Before going into the field next morning, the father built a high platform of bamboos on which he placed the children and the motherless pigs, telling the children not to climb down during the day lest the tiger should again appear. The beast returned as expected and filled the air with its angry roaring, until the children threw down one of the pigs in the hope of quieting it. From time to time during the day its roaring was recompensed in the same manner, the children, meantime, watching the path with straining eyes for the return of their father and mother and listening intently for the sound of the bow-string which should tell them that an arrow was speeding on its way to put an end to the tiger. Thus "Y'wa" was apparently leaving the Karen people to their fate, while they were keeping on good terms with "Mü kaw li" by means of

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pagoda which should reach to heaven. When the pagoda was half built, God came down and confounded the speech of the people and they became scattered. The father of the Gaikho tribe was reputed to be "Than man ral," who came westward from the Red Karen country in which they had all previously dwelt, and with eight chiefs settled in the valley of the Sittang River. Dr. Francis Mason doubts the antiquity of this legend, for it certainly shows the marks of Hebrew influence. (Dr. Mason in *Journal, Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1868, Vol. XXXVII, p. 163).

[12] The above paraphrase is based on the translation of the legends by Dr. Mason as printed in the *Journal, Burma Research Society*, Vol. I, Pt. II, pp. 24, ff.

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776 offerings and ceremonies and were hoping for the return of the white brother with the Lost Book.

Beliefs Concerning the Soul and the Life Principle

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761 The Karen distinguish between the "tha" or soul and the "k'la" or life principle (shade) of every human being. They think of the soul as the seat of their moral nature, endowed with conscience, that is, the power of apprehending right and wrong, and with a personality that persists after death. The soul is responsible and is judged for the acts in the flesh. The "k'la" is more intimately associated with one's physical existence. It is the force that keeps one alive and well. As it is being constantly solicited by demons and more or less by the "k'las" of dead relatives to leave the body, it needs the protection of charms, offerings, and medicines.[13] As the "k' la" comes from a previous existence to inhabit the body at the time of birth and departs into a new existence at death, so also it leaves the body for brief periods and at frequent intervals, as during sleep. If it remains away longer than usual, its absence causes the sickness and even the death of
[513] the body. As the "k' la" may be away visiting friends or on other errands during the sleeping hours, it is not safe to waken a sleeper suddenly. His "k' la" may not have yet returned, in which case he could not long survive. One Karen told me that he had dreamed of seeing various persons in heaven and hell and naively remarked that his "k' la" must have journeyed to those abodes during his sleep. Another Karen, whose wife underwent a surgical operation at a hospital in the city, asked me whether the ether cone was not used to extract and hold her "k' la," in order to render her unconscious, the "k' la" being restored to her to enable her to regain her faculties. The "k' las" of children are supposed to be peculiarly susceptible to being enticed away by those of the dead. Hence, it is customary to tie children up in the house while a corpse is being carried out. I have experienced considerable difficulty in inducing the inhabitants of outlying villages to let me take their pictures, for fear their "k' las" would be carried off along with the photo-

[13] A full study of the Karen "k' la" and "tha" was made by the early missionaries to determine which of these two words should be used in translating the word, soul. "Tha" was the word finally chosen. The results of these studies are recorded, those of Dr. Wade, in *The Karen Thesaurus*, new ed., Vol. I, 442, ff, and those of Dr. Mason in the *Journal, Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. XXX, Pt. II, 195, ff.

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CHAPTER XXII

SUPERNATURAL AND MYTHICAL BEINGS

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In the Karen demonism the spirits are nearly all malevolent, and it takes a large share of the time of the people to keep on good terms with them. In the hills and remote regions these mythical beings still hold sway; but the average Karen on the plains of Lower Burma retains only a vague and dubious belief in these powers, which have lost their control over him for the most part, now that he has come into contact with many outside influences. The fullest account of these spirits is given in the *Karen Thesaurus* and the writings of Drs. Francis Mason and E. B. Cross. It is from these records, written in the early days before the Karen were disturbed by civilizing influences, that I have chiefly drawn the materials for this chapter.[1]

These numerous beings may be divided into three groups or divisions: first, those spirits that are thought to dwell apart, to possess human attributes, and to control the destiny of men and events; second, the spirits of mortals that for some reason have been condemned to wander about and that have relations, usually evil, with living men; and, third, a number of hetergeneous spirits that never were mortal, but still can influence men at various times and places. The members of this class are not so generally recognized as those of the first class.

In the first group are the "Mü xa" and the "Hti k' sa kaw k' sa," both of which are conceived of as being companies of divinities; "Naw k' plaw" or "Mü kaw li," who corresponds to Satan; "Hpi Bi Yaw," the Karen corn maiden; "Hkü Te," the ruler of hades, and "Teu Kweh," the rainbow.

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The "Mü xa" seem to be a race of celestial beings, of whom "Mü xa do" (literally, the great "Mü xa") is the king. They appear to have existed prior to men, but good men may after death become members of their company and dwell with them in the upper regions of the air. They are not malicious, although offerings are

[1] Dr. J. Wade, *The Karen Thesaurus*, ed. of 1915, Vol. I, pp. 433-434; Dr. F. Mason, *Journal, Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. XXXIV, Pt. II, pp. 198, ff; Rev. E. B. Cross, *Journal, Oriental Society*, Vol. IV, (1854) pp. 312, ff.

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made to them lest their anger should be aroused by some untoward act on the part of men. Their special task is to preside over births. Their king occupies himself with the creation of men, but, being interrupted continually by various demands upon his attention, he turns out many defectives, cripples, and badly colored ones. This poor workmanship led men in the past to revile the "Mü xa," who, consequently, no longer show themselves to mortals. They have the power to unite the souls of those whom they have predestined to marry. Those thus paired are vouchsafed prosperous and happy lives; but if they succeed in mating with others than those intended for them, incompatibility and adversity surely follow. The "Mü xa" are often addressed as though they were the parents of mankind and appear to hold places comparable to that of Zeus or Jupiter among the gods of the ancient Greeks and Romans. They are often spoken of in Karen lore as dwelling on Mount "Thaw Thi," as Zeus in Greek mythology had his abode on Mount Olympus.[2] In the celebration of family rites and feasts the "Mü xa" are recognized by having words addressed to them, although the family spirits, commonly designated as "Bgha," are often thought of as the powers to be propitiated at this ceremony. In some sections of the country the "parents of mankind" are supposed to receive offerings in their extended hands, which are thereby cleansed. They are then expected to return to their celestial abode, the hope being that they will not descend again to the dwelling-place of mortals, lest, by some mischance, they should become offended and bring misfortune upon men. They are believed to be able to assume any form they wish and to render themselves visible or invisible at will.[3]

One member of this group, called "Mü xa hkleu," is thought to preside over the much-venerated banyan *(Ficus religiost)*. It was under a banyan tree that Gautama Buddha received his enlightenment. The banyan is, however, held sacred by most of the tribes of Indo-China, even though they are not Buddhists. No doubt the wonderful vitality of the seeds of this tree which germinate anywhere, especially in the crotches of other trees and in the head of the palm, later enveloping, killing, and thriving on its host, has helped to evoke the veneration of the peoples familiar with the banyan. According to the Karen legends, the rhinoceros ("ta do hkaw") is the beast on which the guardian spirit of the banyan tree is accustomed

[2] See Chapter XXV in regard to Mount "Thaw Thi," pp. 262-264.
[3] For a description of the rites tendered to the "Mü xa" see pp. 248, 254, 266.

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to ride when searching for the "k' las" of human beings. Any person who kills one of these animals arouses the enmity of the spirit.

The "Hti k' sa kaw k' sa," or "lords of the water and land," or "lords of the earth," are the deities who rule over the lands of the earth. They are superior to the spirits that preside over rivers and mountains and have tempers that are easily disturbed. Ill-spoken words, as well as improper and immoral actions, easily offend them; and they take vengeance on persons guilty of such misdemeanors by sending tigers, snakes, and various illnesses upon them. They are sometimes confused with the king of hades, who also passes judgment on the sins of mortals. One way to avoid angering the lords of the earth is to scrape a little rice from the top of the pot while cooking and lay it aside as an offering to them. Concerning their relation to these divinities, the people say that if they transgress in their language while in a distant land, the lords of the earth will kill them before dark; but if guilty of swearing or using indecent words in their own country, they can assuage the anger of these spirits by making an offering of rice and water at the foot of a tree and uttering the following prayer: "O Lords of the earth, we are ignorant people. Whatever transgressions we have been guilty of in using harsh or obscene words, do not, O Lords, hold them against us. We will make offerings annually. If we do not die, you shall eat of our food every year and of our children's offerings generation after generation."

Every tree, river, lake, and, indeed, almost every natural object is supposed by the Karen to be inhabited by its "k' sa" or divinity. These local spirits, however, are regarded by many as constituting lower orders of the divinities of the first group. When a man selects the location for his field, he must perform certain ceremonies to win their good will. The simplest of these is to place offerings of rice and water at the foot of some large tree in the plot chosen or to go through the ceremonies described in the chapter on Agricultural Pursuits and Other Occupations.[4] There are also the annual sacrifices to these spirits that have been described fully in the chapter on Propitiatory Sacrifices and Healing Offerings, pp. 234, ff.

The nefarious work and character of "Naw k' plaw" or "Mū kaw li" have been sufficiently revealed in the narration of the story of his temptation of the first parents of the Karen race in the

[4] See ante, pp. 76, ff.

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orchard that was planted for them by the great and eternal God, "Y'wa." (See pp. 214-216.)

The divinity that presides over the cultivation of the paddy is known as "Hpi Bi Yaw." The legend relating to this goddess states that she and her spouse, in the form of pythons, slept on the paddy pile of a certain man and thereby caused the increase of his grain until it filled three bins, but that the ungrateful wretch killed the male serpent, bringing a curse upon himself as the result of which his supply gave out at the end of three months. In the attempt to buy enough grain to furnish food for his family he was reduced to poverty. After this "Hpi Bi Yaw" taught an orphan how to raise abundant crops in return for offerings which he made to her. As the other people were ignorant of what was expected of them, she first destroyed their crops and later caused their death, thereby instituting the custom of sacrifices in her honor.

Another legend in regard to "Hpi Bi Yaw" relates that in the guise of a dreadful old hag she begged men, who were seeking food in the jungle during a famine, to share with her. They refused; but an orphan, following in her path, took pity on her and was rewarded by being instructed in all the arts of raising paddy. Beginning with three kernels, which he took from the stomach of a dove, he grew both the early and the ordinary varieties of rice, as well as the glutinous rice. With a small knife given him by the goddess he was able to clear away the jungle-growth from his field at a stroke. Returning home with him, she directed him to boil a pot of water, and into it she shook an ample quantity of rice for the meal from her finger-tips. Through her favor his field surpassed all others in productivity and was cut by one sweep of the sickle. The grain was transferred from the field to its bin by magic, and, although stolen by the villagers, was restored by the goddess's dancing in the empty bin. During successive years she befriended the orphan and even dwelt in a hut in his field during the cultivating season, until he became prosperous enough to marry. The very next season, however, the orphan's wife became jealous of the goddess, came to the field, and beat her with a bamboo pole, until the divinity managed to escape from her assailant by changing herself into a cricket and hiding in a crab's burrow. "Hpi Bi Yaw" became so incensed at the outrageous treatment she had received that she has never returned since to aid any mortal; but

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offerings are made to her, and the rim of earth that encircles the entrance to crabs' burrows is placed on top of the paddy pile and in the bin in her honor.[3]

"Hkü Te" is the lord of the region of death, the king of hades. His origin is explained as follows: A couple dwelling in the spirit

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A Bwe Karen Christian Village, Toungoo District
The Karen still love to build their houses as close together as possible.

realm once plotted to slay and devour their son-in-law. Accordingly, they turned themselves into giant winding creepers hanging across the road by which their intended victim was returning from his field, carrying a basket of paddy. Instead of attempting to pass under the vines, as he was expected to do, the son-in-law severed them with his sickle. One of the creepers, the wife, immediately flew upward to the sky and became a rainbow, while the other penetrated the earth, resumed his original form as a man, and became king of hades. There he receives the souls of mortals and rules over the dead. As judge of those under his authority he grants permission to the ones that have lived worthily to enter the higher realms, but he condemns to the lowest hell those of base lives. No offerings are made to this Karen Pluto.

[3] See ante, p. 62. An account of the ceremonies performed in connection with the cultivation of paddy occupies pp. 54-62. The myth concerning "Hpi Bi Yaw" resembles more or less that of the Irish and Scotch corn maidens, Kernaby, and suggests that of the Roman Ceres and the Greek Demeter: Sir J. G. Frazer, "The Spirits of the Corn and of the Wild," in *The Golden Bough*, Vols. VII and VIII.

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776 773 821 823 "Hkü Te" is to be seen as a rainbow in the west occasionally. At such times, according to one version of the legend, he is lowering a tube through which to drink the liquor provided at wedding-feasts. When a rainbow appears in the west early in the morning, the king of hades is again in the sky, this time setting up a funeral post ("t le") for his children.[6] From this it seems that he has had several offspring, but his wife has never borne him any since their son-in-law thwarted their plot against his life in the remote past. The funeral post is intended to remind men that many persons have died without receiving proper burial ceremonies. Such neglect entails some sort of a calamity. Hence, the Karen are stricken with terror when they observe the rainbow arching the western heavens early in the morning, especially if this sign is accompanied by thunder and earthquake. Under such circumstances they will not go to their work, for it is tabu.[7] If a Karen should point at such a rainbow, he would at once thrust his finger into his navel in order to avoid the loss of the offending member. This act is called "ugh de de."

The people say of the rainbow in the east that at the time "Teu Kweh," wife of "Hkü Te," became the bow of promise in the sky she was pregnant, and, being now separated from the earth, she is seen from time to time in the east going to draw water for herself. The souls of women who die with child are supposed to have no other means of obtaining drink, except from the rainbow divinity. When two rainbows appear in the east, the upper and larger one is her husband, who is visiting with her.

766 775 The second group of spirits among the Karen comprises those who have spent some time on earth as human beings, but have not gained entrance into the realm of the dead because they were denied funeral rites either on account of their bad character or on account of their having died by violence. Hence they are doomed to wander about, avenging themselves upon mortals. As they are supposed to be particularly occupied with this mission at nightfall, the Karen think it imprudent to be out during the early evening.

This division consists of three groups of beings. The first are "Th' re ta hka," or ghosts of those who have died violent deaths or have been carried off by epidemics of cholera, smallpox, etc. and could not, therefore, be given proper funeral ceremonies. They are believed to bring violent deaths and epidemics upon mortals, prob-

[6] See Chapter XX on Funeral Customs, p. 266.
[7] See Chapter XXVIII on Tabu, p. 289.

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ably in revenge for the manner of their own taking-off. The second group is made up of those who were notoriously evil in the earthly life and suffered capital punishment for their crimes, and of those who as chiefs were known to be tyrants. This group as a whole is called "Ta mü xa." [8] Its members appear in the forms of giants and goblins or of Burman "pongyis" (Buddhist monks) and are usually seen by sick persons whose spirits ("k'las") they are seeking and on which they subsist.[9] These demons are attended by dogs in the form of woodpeckers. According to a legend two men, who were detained in the forest until night, heard a woodpecker call, and immediately thereafter they heard some ghosts say that the dog had barked. One of the men shouted, but they could distinguish nothing but some remark about monkeys, followed by the sound of a bowstring. The pair being thus discovered by the woodpecker, which was evidently with the demons, were stricken with a chill and died the next morning. Consequently, when a Karen hears the scream of this bird of ill-omen, he calls out:

"Shun me; stay far off.
Go thine own way; keep thine own road."

The third group of the ghosts of mortals consists of those who, through some accident, have been deprived of the funeral ceremonies. This group was discovered ages ago through the distressing experience of a certain patriarch, who came upon the body of a Talain who had been struck by lightning. He carried off the skull, took it home, and put it up over his fireplace. During the night the death's-head assumed human form and wandered all over the house, thereby striking terror into the members of the family. Before morning it resumed its former shape. The ghosts of people thus accidentally killed and left unburied are called "Ta t' hka" or "Ta s' hka." They inspire the Karen with horror, a fact taken advantage of by some miscreants who work evil on their enemies by means of a skull kept for the purpose. However, such working of evil falls within the realm of magic.[10]

The third general division of spirits comprises a heterogeneous lot of divinities, who exercise more or less influence on the life and prosperity of men. Some of these may have been inherited from

[8] The Karen designation of this group differs in pronunciation from that of the celestial beings (Mü xa) not only in having three syllables, but also in that its last syllable has the grave or heavy tone, while in the latter case "xa" is given the rising or light tone.

[9] For the rites in connection with these, see p. 240.

[10] See Chapter XXVI on Magic, p 274.

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776 older tribes in the country, but have become the common property of the Karen for several generations back.

773 823 The Titan Atlas of the ancient Greeks, supporting a globe, has his counterpart in "Hsi gu maw ya" or "Maw ya," as he is sometimes called. He is a brother of "Y'wa" and holds the world on his shoulders. When he grows weary, he shifts it from one side to the other and thus causes earthquakes. Sometimes the beetles that feed on the refuse of human beings report to him that they are starving, because there are no more people to supply them with food. This so angers him that he shakes himself and produces a series of earth-tremors. As these phenomena are common in Burma, the Karen seek to quiet them by shouting out: "We are still here. We are still here." Work is tabu during the day on which an earthquake occurs.[11]

778 821 The semiannual change of seasons can not but attract the attention of the people living in Burma. For the Karen a company of demons, the "Law," is responsible for the wet season and another group, the "Hku de," for the dry season. The former, who are sometimes named the "Law hpo" (signifying a company of them), are believed to have cities and dwellings in the upper regions, whence they regulate the rainfall and reveal themselves in the thunder and lightning. The flashes of lightning are nothing less than the flapping of their wings and the thunder is the rattle of their flying shafts against their foes, the "Hku de."

824 776 231 The "Law" are also regarded as the source of the fructifying power in all plants and trees that form their fruits in the wet season. The grain is said to be conceiving when the kernels are developing, and the "Law hpo" are said to be the husbands who bring this about. Their function is to provide the plants, especially the paddy which is heading during the latter part of the rainy season, with the "sgheu" (the life-giving principle), that is, the vaporous substance that comes from the land of the dead and revives all life on the earth.[12] The scarcity of domestic animals among the Karen is attributed to these demons, who are alleged to have raised such a stifling dust by shooting their shafts against the rocks that the creatures took refuge in the jungle and became wild before they could be caught again.

821 776 The enemies of the "Law," the "Hku de," are also demons of the upper air with a human appearance, but no abiding-place. Dur-

[11] See Chapter XXVIII on Tabu, p. 289.
[12] See Chapter XXI on Religious Conceptions, p. 222.

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ing the period when the "Law" are supreme, these divinities betake themselves to the clefts and fissures of the rocks on Mount "Thaw Thi"; but towards the end of the wet season they begin to gather their forces together for a mortal combat with their opponents. The flashing of spears is seen in the forked lightning, and the force of the blows exchanged is revealed in the roar of the thunder. The "Law hpo" are unable to hold out against the onslaught and withdraw for six months to the fissures and rifts in the rocks from which the "Hku de" came forth. A half-year later the "Law" will vanquish the present victors.

The "P'yo" are demons, usually in the form of dragons or serpents, that blow the water up from the ocean and produce the clouds from which the rain descends. They sometimes take on human form, and in this guise they figure in many Karen tales. They preside over the deep pools of streams, whose flow may otherwise be reduced to the merest trickle. The king of the crocodiles, "Maw law kwi," is said to be one of these demons.

Eclipses, like the clouds, are supposed to be caused by demons; but the eclipse-producing demons were once the dogs of a certain mythical personage who tried unsuccessfully to recover his stolen elixir of life from the moon. These dogs are "K' paw ta thu" and "T' hke mo bak." [13]

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There are other mythical beings of whom the Karen have more or less vague ideas, for example, the two daughters of "Y'wa" who came to earth in order to improve the condition of men. A prophet discovered their identity and urged the people to build a temple for their worship. The Pwo Karens not only failed to follow this advice, but also disregarded the proprieties so far as to begin pulling out their gold and silver hair ornaments. The goddesses became so disgusted with this rude treatment that they hastened back to their celestial abode, nevermore to be seen by mankind.

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A large group of malevolent beings, much feared by the Karen, are the "Ta na." These are witch-like in their operations, but possess the power to assume almost any form at will in order to harm mortals and are superhuman. They are not to be confused with the Burmese "nats," although they have certain resemblances to them.[14]

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[13] For the tale of the origin of eclipses see Chapter XI on Measures of Time and Space. Karen Astronomy, p. 59.

[14] See "Shwe Yoe" (Sir J. G. Scott), *The Burmese, His Life and Notions*, Chap. XXII, pp. 290, ff.

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776 773 The origin of the "Ta na" is explained in two ways. According to one of these accounts, a basket containing all manner of living creatures was once set before the human race. The people were commanded to partake of them all, lest, if any were left, they might be themselves devoured by the survivors. But the "Ta na" clung so closely to the bottom of the basket that they were overlooked and have been able to terrify mortals ever since. The other explanation of the origin of these beings is that they were a sort of supernatural stomach belonging to certain persons and subsisting not on ordinary food, but on the "k'las" or spirits of human beings. The stomachs were capable of detaching themselves, in order to go in search of their special kind of nutriment. They may perhaps be compared to the old conception of the nightmare in English folklore, except that this demon confined its activities to the sleeping hours of the victim. The depredations of the horrible "Ta na" are related in many stories, of which the following may serve as an illustration:

A man was awakened one night by a figure, which he took to be that of his nephew in the act of massaging him. Next morning the nephew denied all knowledge of the incident and requested his uncle to strike him, if he was again detected in so strange a procedure. The next night there was a recurrence of the incident, but the uncle refrained from hitting his nephew, as he supposed the apparition to be. On the third night, however, he cut off the head of the troublesome visitor; and after dawn a headless corpse was found in the village, which the uncle regarded as proof that the "na" had assumed the form of his nephew in the effort to obtain his own shade ("k'la").

In another instance, one of the "Ta na" gave a slave girl the appearance of her mistress and *vice versa*. As a result of this exchange of characters the husband sent his wife into the fields to drive the birds from the standing grain. The wife, making friends with the birds, easily induced them to let the paddy alone; while she sent a dove to her mother to fetch some fragrant oil, by means of which she was at length restored to her own form and station.

One of the measures sometimes taken by a Karen to protect his field from the ravages of the birds, is to impale a tuft of grass on a sharp stick in token of the kind of treatment he declares himself to be visiting on the demon itself. The latter is thereby duly warned to stay away from the field.

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As certain "na" dwell in the water, persons who go in bathing must take care not to offend them. Otherwise, the bathers are liable to sudden illness.

A monster called "T'nu" appears destined to play the part of destroying angel among the Karen after the righteous shall have disappeared from the earth. He will then exterminate the wicked. He is represented as going about with a huge crossbow.

There is a race of giants, known as "Daw t'ka," who, like the "Ta na," feed on the "k'las" of mortals. They are greatly feared by the Karen, especially in Siam where the people refuse to send their children to school in the neighboring district of Moulmein, lest these spirit-eating giants may devour them.

In the Shwegyin district "Ta t' hkaw hkaw" (the one-legged one) is a demon with the form of a female with but one leg on which she hops along the jungle paths, occasionally falling over. If one answers her call for help and assists her to arise, her ill-temper causes her to give no other acknowledgment of the service than a slap in the face of him who renders it. The Brecs offer the alleged bones of this creature for sale to the women of other tribes, who prize them greatly as charms.

From the foregoing account it will be readily seen that the life of the Karen has been dominated by superstitious beliefs in unseen and malicious powers, which seem to be always in waiting to take offense and do some harm to his crops, his family, or himself. In the succeeding chapter his efforts to propitiate and keep on good terms with these myriad demons are set forth.

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CHAPTER XXIV

FEASTS TO THE "BGHA"

THE CEREMONIAL OF THE FEASTS

776 782 "Mü xa do" (the great "Mü xa" or king of the "Mü xa") is the demon most intimately connected with the affairs of men. He may serve as their guardian and protector if properly propitiated with offerings; but he is more often feared as the author of all kinds of evil. Some Karens, especially in Shwegyin, regard him as a household deity to whom the family offer their sacrifices called "ta aw Bgha" (to eat the "Bghas"). He is addressed as "Thi Hko Mü Xa," and is evidently regarded as the lord of demons.[1] In most parts of the Sgaw Karen country, however, the "Bgha" is mentioned as being distinct from "Mü xa do" and, in a special way, as the tutelary god of the family by whom it is reverenced and feared. It is supposed to subsist upon the "k'las" or shades of the members of the family, if it is not provided generously with pork and chicken; and even then the family's immunity may not be assured. In their prayers and offerings the people sometimes associate the "T'reh t' hka" with the "Bgha," the former having, as I understand it, no connection with the family. Perhaps this is a precaution taken in the hope of appeasing whichever spirit may be responsible for the misfortune they are trying to alleviate.

769 A veneration of ancestors is manifest all through the family ceremonies treated in this chapter. The ancestors are thought of as taking an interest, although not always a friendly one, in the affairs of living men. The Karen do not, however, indulge in ancestor worship to the extent that the Chinese practice it.

776 The family "Bghas" are said to be eternal. As new unions take place and households are set up generation by generation, each family finds itself provided with a "Bgha" of its own. But what the relation of the new crop of "Bghas" is to that of the preceding generation, no one is able to explain.

887 611 562 The grandmother or the eldest female in the direct line of the family presides as the high priestess at the "Bgha" feast of the

[1] Dr. Wade in The Karen Thesaurus, new ed., Vol. I., p. 488.

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a spit, its bristles are burned off, and it is then carried into the house and laid at the head of the sleeping-mats. The father and other members of the family touch the side of the animal with the tips of their fingers. In Shwegyin and Siam this rite is still observed, but in many other localities it has been discontinued. The pig is now ready to be cut up and cooked, after which the members of the family each taste of the meat in turn, avoiding eating anything from the hind-quarters that day and from the fore-quarters the next, in case their grandparents are living. If, however, their grandparents are dead, they may eat from any part of the animal. After having thus each taken a morsel, they complete their meal. If any is left after the feast, it is not uncommon nowadays for the family to invite in some of their neighbors to finish the remainder. This is contrary to the old practice among the Karen.

In the remoter regions, where the complete ceremonial is still observed, its main features differ but little from those described above, but the details are much more fully observed, and I will, therefore, describe the ceremonial as it is carried out in those areas. The rice having first been cooked, the water from it must be poured into the fireplace and the pot set down in the wet ashes, while the chicken is caught by the wife who brings the fowl into the house and hands it to her husband. He holds it under his arm, strokes its beak toward the point, and says: "Take away sickness. Remove weariness and swellings. Give me life and health for a hundred years." Then the wife and each child in turn stroke the chicken's beak, while the father repeats the same prayer for each one. He next wrings the fowl's neck, scalds the bird in a jar of water, plucks its feathers and carefully puts them in a receptacle by the fire, and removes the intestines and places them with the feathers. The flesh is cut up, cooked, and served, each member of the family taking a morsel. The father now places a small quantity of the rice and chicken on a tray and summons "the great ancestors of old" to partake. Meantime, the family eat the feast, after which the father throws away the offering. The pig is eaten on the following day, but in Siam two days are allowed to elapse before this part of the feast is celebrated. In preparation for this event the father goes into the jungle after an early breakfast, taking with him one of his children or, if he has no child, calling some other boy to accompany him. He carries a small basket and his "xeh" or sickle. He returns with two pieces of bamboo, each two full joints in

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supply themselves with pieces of plantain leaf and in turn help themselves from each of the three leaves while praying: "O Lord of the great spirits, do thou, who carest for us, prevent all sickness and sorrow from approaching us. May we be protected from injury by sharp sticks of bamboo and wood, by the arrows and spears of our enemies, and from all evil that may befall us. Wilt thou be our shield and defense." Through a small bamboo tube the grandmother-priestess drinks a little liquor from the pot, as do her relatives in their turn. She then points a newly sprouted plantain leaf at the skull of the pig, which has been hung up over her mat, and repeats the last prayer. Then all drink a little more of the liquor and are ready to follow the example of the priestess in partaking of the feast.

The earthen pot, in which the pork has been cooked, is intended to remind the kindred that they are children of the earth; while the bamboo joints, in which some of the offerings have been prepared, serve to keep before their minds the temporary character of their bamboo houses and utensils.

CUSTOMS INCIDENTAL TO THE "BGHA" FEASTS

Certain customs and tabus incidental to the "Bgha" feasts should be noted. Unless all the members of the family are present at such a ceremony, except those excluded from the feast, the offerings are thought to be objectionable to the "Bgha." If a person absents himself from a feast that is being held to promote the recovery of a sick relative, he is suspected of desiring the continued illness or the death of the sick one. Or his absence may be interpreted as an effort to bring calamity upon some member of the family. Such charges are made against the member of a family who becomes a Christian and remains away from the ceremony. The others allege that he no longer retains his affection for his kindred and is willing to bring illness and disaster upon them by his absence, which angers the "Bgha."

While the feasts are in progress, no stranger is permitted to enter the family-room. When I first traveled in the hills, I noticed that as I passed through the corridor of a village-house some member of a family stood in the doorway of one or another of the family-rooms to prevent my entering. This seemed strange, in view of the fact that I was usually received with cordial hospitality. On inquiry I found that the guarding of the door was to keep me from

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the Karen back in the mythological age, and which the latter carelessly burned when he set fire to the brush that he had cut from his field. What offerings more acceptable to the "Bgha" could be made than the creatures that had absorbed the wisdom of the divine book?[3] That the pig is regarded as a vicarious sacrifice is shown by the rite in which the members of the family touch the side of the animal, while the "Lord of the spirits" is asked to protect them from sickness and sorrow. However, the Karen do not charge the pig with a message to the great spirit, as do the Kenyah and Kayan tribes of Borneo;[4] nor do they put their sins on the pig, as did the ancient Hebrews on the head of the sacrificial bullock or on the scapegoat.[5] In Toungoo the dog is substituted for the pig in the family rites, the tradition there being that it ate some of the fragments of the book of wisdom. The Rev. E. W. Blythe is authority for the statement that the cat is also offered to the "Bgha" in Toungoo.[6] The Bwe and Red Karen tribes, among whom the ox, buffalo, and goat are the common domestic animals, use one or another of these creatures, according to the manifestations obtained through divination.[7] I am told that in Shwegyin there are some localities where the people do not sacrifice animals of any kind, but make offerings of flowers only.

The leaves used in the feasts must be those of the wild plantain ("ya"), which is found everywhere in the jungle throughout Burma; for the tradition is that it was this variety of plantain which "Htaw Meh Pa," the mythical ancestor of the Karen race, cut off in blazing the trail for his people to follow on the way to a more fruitful land.[8]

The miniature house ("hi hpo kheh") is intended as a resting-place for the "Bgha," when it comes to enjoy the feast provided for it. This tiny structure is set in the inner room where the pig is killed, the sacrificial fireplace built, and the feast held. This fireplace is a sacred family altar apart from the place where the cooking is carried on daily. The inner room affords greater privacy to the family during the feasts. The Pwo Karen have special trays and dishes for their feasts, which are kept sacredly for this purpose.

[3] Colonel A. R. MacMahon, *The Karens of the Gold Chersonese*, pp. 140, ff. For the story of the Lost Book see p. 333.

[4] Hose and MacDougall, *Pagan Tribes of Borneo*, Vol. II, pp. 60, ff.

[5] Leviticus, 16:21-23.

[6] Rev. E. W. Blythe in *The Rangoon Diocesan Quarterly*, 1917, p. 9.

[7] E. O'Riley in *Journal, Indian Archipelago*, 1859, p. 16.

[8] See *ante*, p. 5.

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served their tabus they prospered, but when they neglected them they suffered adversity, it is alleged.

Marriage of a Karen with a person of another race was formerly strictly forbidden. This exclusiveness kept the racial stock pure and unmixed. In recent times the prohibition has not been rigorously enforced. Hence, the barriers between the Karen on the one hand and the Burmese and Shan on the other have been somewhat weakened, betokening—it must be confessed—a moral looseness that was unknown before. The village elders have always maintained that marriages outside of the tribe ("taw leu hko") were not good, although such unions have not been lately tabued. Marriages between members of the same tribe or of the same village, providing the parties concerned are not more closely related than cousins, are permitted. To marry a relative closer than a cousin would be incest, and all the tribes forbid such unions. On the day of a wedding in a village the inhabitants are forbidden to labor.

Adultery and fornication are under strict tabu, except in the Red Karen tribe,[2] the belief among the other tribes being that these sins are offensive to the "Bgha" [3] and destroy the productiveness of the fields, the "Lords of the earth" withholding their favor from the crops when they find that such deeds have been committed. In making their annual feast to these deities, the Bwe tribe formerly required those who had been guilty of uncleanness during the year to confess their sins and did not permit them to come near the sacrificial altars.

A number of prohibitions are connected with birth. One of the Sgaw precepts forbids pregnant women to eat the flesh of the curious monkey-tiger *(Ictides ater)*, bitter herbs, and the long smooth pod called alligator's tongue. Before the men adopted the modern fashion of wearing their hair short, the husband of a woman who was with child was not permitted to trim his locks, for fear of shortening the life of his expected offspring. During the first six days following a birth the custom of the Paduang denies to the father the right of associating or even speaking with any one, except his own family. He alone cares for the mother and child during the period named.[4] The purpose of thus secluding the father is to prevent the transmission of the danger and weakness

[2] See Dr. Mason's account in the *Journal, Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1866.

[3] This is true in those localities where the "Bgha" are regarded as the family penates. In other localities, as among the Bwe, the offended powers were the "lords of the earth."

[4] Lieutenant E. W. Carrick, *Report on Bwe Expedition*, 1894-95, p. 23.

[5] E. B. Cross, J. A. O. S. (1854) Vol. IV, 293, ff. and D. C. Gilmore, Journ. Burma

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
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341. KAREN LIQUOR-STILL.

miniature bamboo hut is made (*tâ-lhâ*, No. 337), and furnished with utensils or symbols of such. The joints of bamboo piled against the horizontal bar represent vessels for the blood of the offering; the whole offering is really appropriated by the votaries. The *yahán* have persuaded the Karéns under their influence to discontinue keeping animals, so as to be out of temptation to sacrifice to *nats*. The Karén idea of *nat* is exclusively an evil spirit, whereas the Burmans have the conception of *thadyâ* and *byaumâ*, beings of a transfigured human nature; by them *nat* is chiefly used in this sense (p. 186). The Karéns also offer to the *nats* the liquor they brew (*kaung*), which is distilled from a wort made by setting boiled rice to ferment. The drinking of this offering at the shrine is accompanied by saltatory movements. What the Karéns can save, they invest in purchase of elephants (No. 333). Owing to the transient nature of the hill-settlements, the paths do not get well enough worn for pack-oxen. The elephant is the only beast of burden available to them; an elephant can carry five to ten hundredweight in the hills (No. 314). A small village clubs together to buy an elephant to carry in the corn and take the secondary crops to market; well-to-do villages own several elephants. Individuals who own a couple are accounted wealthy, but some own as many as twenty. They hire the animals out for carrying produce or for timber-work, or engage in this business on their own account. Their spare cash the Karéns bury in the earth or hide in growing bamboos. The point of the *dâ* is struck into a green culm so as to open a slit. The rupees are dropped in, the *dâ* pulled out, and not a trace remains. Karéns are good workers in bamboo and cane, and are excellent woodmen. They are expert in

342. KAREN HIDING COIN IN A GROWING BAMBOO.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
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548. KAREN WITH DECOY-COCK.

Men and Women

labour out-of-doors till about sixty. The oldest women who can move make their daily journey for water, which is fetched and stored in joints of the giant bamboo. Old men occupy themselves with plaiting mats and baskets, and repairing gear. None are idle. The Karéns are acquainted with the medicinal virtues of many plants, such as bitter barks for ague. But all sickness and misfortunes are ascribed to the *nats*. Offerings and charms are relied on more than medicines. When a person dies, the body is treated with great respect, and every kind of offering is made to propitiate the spirit. The corpse is cremated, and the bones are buried at a place devoted to this use (*ayè-daung*), often at a distance, owing to the migrations of villages. Here a shrine is erected, consisting of a miniature hut, upon which a rude carving of a bird always figures. This symbolizes a mythical creature which conveys the spirit over rivers and chasms on its wanderings. For some time after a death, cotton threads are stretched beside the footbridges for the spirit to pass by on, without meeting the living. A shrine similar to that at the *ayèdaung* is made at a place where two roads cross, and at each shrine the clothing of the deceased, and sometimes new clothing and utensils, are dedicated. It is at funerals that the dreary Karén music is chiefly heard. The tones are very widely contrasted. The dirge is accompanied by the notes of the *pdzi*, a great drum of bronze, cast in the Shan country, in a single piece, though the metal is only the eighth of an inch thick. The *pdzi* is struck on the end with a padded hammer for the deep fundamental tone, and flicked on the side with a stick to bring out harmonics an octave or two higher.

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547. DECOY-COCK IN THE CIRCLE OF SNARES.

000 The *Karennî*, or "Red

Akha AP4 Karen AP7
Lahu AP13 Wa AP12

K 342 [354] etc. are offered as a sacrifice to the spirits. The fireplace in the center of the single inside room is sunken and rests on a structure made of four posts which rise from under the floor of the hut. Small bamboo pipes containing rice brandy are kept for the house spirits at the entrance to the hut, on the roof, and beneath the fireplace. A pig's skull, a pig's bladder, and a bundle of leaves, together with chicken bones which are used by all the mountain tribes for soothsaying, hang from the rafters. The piles under the house are joined together with crossbeams; the place is used at night as a stable for the buffaloes.

K [782] [787] [231]

L 101 342 177 Of the tribes who live in the Southern Shan States, particularly in Kentung and the adjoining areas, the Lahu or Muhsö--1911: 18,103--and the kindred Kwi (26)--1911: 3,189--build

26. UBG I, 1 pp. 576 ff.

A 342 their houses either in the Shan style, or, sometimes in the style of the Wa or Yao; the Akha or Kaw (27) together with the AKo--1911: 37,300

27. Ibid., pp. 588 ff.

--have houses which are raised by low piles. Most of them have only one single overcrowded and neglected interior room.

W 101 Of more interest and importance are the Wa (28).

28. Ibid., pp. 493 ff.; about village and house layouts, pp. 498 ff., 503 ff. Also G. Drage, A Few Notes on Wa (Rangoon, 1907), pp. 34 ff.

A few of the tribes of the "tame" Wa live in Kengtung, Manglun and the adjacent Shan regions --1911: 14,674. Some of them, after embracing